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THE VOTER '76 REVIEW JOURNAL

a newsletter for local government study commissions

Vol. 7 Helena, Montana 59601 May 1976

Tentative Reports: Deadline June 1

REPORTS MUST BE ADOPTED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

IF YOU NEED HELP MEETING THE DEADLINE, PLEASE CALL TODAY. IT WILL BE TOO LATE ON MAY 30. WE CAN HELP YOU NOW! MODEL FORMS THAT YOU CAN USE TO COMPLETE YOUR REPORT ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE COMMISSION OFFICE. CALL IF YOU NEED HELP. (449-2814)

WE HAVE WORKED WITH ALMOST EVERY STUDY COMMISSION IN THEIR CITY, TOWN, OR COUNTY OVER THE PAST YEAR. DURING THIS LAST MONTH BEFORE THE DEADLINES FOR THE TENTATIVE REPORTS, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TRAVEL; WE THINK WE CAN ANSWER MORE QUESTIONS AND BE OF MORE ASSISTANCE IF WE ARE AVAILABLE IN HELENA FOR TELEPHONE CALLS.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COME TO HELENA FOR WORKING SESSIONS ON YOUR TENTATIVE REPORTS. WE WILL BE GLAD TO MEET WITH YOU AT ANY TIME. PLEASE CALL OR WRITE FOR AN APPOINTMENT.

WE ALSO WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS ON MAY 14, 15, AND 16 IN HELENA, AND ON MAY 21, 22, AND 23 IN GLENDIVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORKSHOPS ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE.

AFTER THE JUNE 1 DEADLINE WE WILL AGAIN BE AVAILABLE TO TRAVEL TO YOUR CITY, TOWN OR COUNTY TO HELP WITH WORK ON YOUR FINAL REPORTS. THESE MUST BE ADOPTED BY AUGUST 1 AND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC BY OCTOBER 3 FOR THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS.

The preparation of this document was fi[illegible] in part through a Comprehensive Planning Assistance Grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as [illegible].

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BRIEFING SESSIONS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE FOR STUDY COMMISSIONS

Please mark your calendar now

Sessions from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

In HELENA: Saturday, May 15, at the House Chambers of the State Capitol

In GLENDIVE: Saturday, May 22, at Dawson Community College in the Rock Room

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FIRST SERIES OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

On each date and location, there will be two sessions

AFTERNOON SESSIONS: 1:30 - 5 p.m. for city and county officials. These sessions will be held to coincide with joint district meetings of the Montana Association of Counties and the Municipal League of Cities and Towns.

EVENING PUBLIC HEARINGS: Each hearing will start at 7 p.m.

Tuesday	May 25 -	in BUTTE at the Butte Community Center, 25 West Front Street (Multi-purpose Room)
Wednesday	May 26 -	in GREAT FALLS at the Civic Center (Council Room)
Thursday	May 27 -	in MISSOULA at the Sentinel High School (Little Theater)
Wednesday	June 2 -	in BILLINGS at Eastern Montana College (Library 148)
Thursday	June 3 -	in MILES CITY at the Miles Community College (Room 106)
Friday	June 4 -	in WOLF POINT at Sherman Inn (Red Lantern Room)
Wednesday	June 9 -	in HELENA at the Highway Dept. Auditorium

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MUSSELSHELL COUNTY PROPOSES COMMISSION-MANAGER

The Musselshell County Study Commission has decided to recommend the commission-manager form as its alternative.

Should the proposal pass, three county commissioners would run in the county's three districts but be elected at large. The commission would serve part-time and be paid at a rate of $50 per meeting attended. A minimum of one meeting a week would be held to legislate the county business.

A county manager would be appointed by and serve at the discretion of the county commissioners.

The superintendent of schools, public administrator and treasurer would be consolidated into one elective office; the clerk of the court and clerk and recorder would be consolidated into the "Director of Records," also an elective position.

The county attorney would be elected on a non-partisan basis; the sheriff and coroner would be appointed.

The voters will decide the issue of partisan or non-partisan elections.

DECISIONS: VOTER REVIEW

This column, which will appear monthly, lists decisions made thus far by study commissions on alternative forms. These decisions may be modified by public input before the final report is written.

COMMISSION-EXECUTIVE

COUNTIES:
- Cascade Charter)
- Custer (Charter)
- Jefferson (Charter)
- Silver Bow/Butte (Charter)

MUNICIPALITIES:
- Big Timber (Charter)
- Bridger (Charter)
- Clyde Park
- Cut Bank
- East Helena
- Eureka (Charter; with town meeting override)
- Sunburst (Charter)
- Glasgow
- Harlowton
- Livingston
- Malta
- Red Lodge
- Shelby
- Sidney (Charter)
- Twin Bridges
- Wolf Point (Charter)

COMMISSION

- Blaine (Charter)
- Madison (Charter)
- Richland (Charter)
- Sweet Grass
- Toole

UNIFICATION

- Anaconda/Deer Lodge County (Charter)
- Butte/Silver Bow County (Charter)
- Missoula/Missoula County (Charter; with manager vs. executive sub-option)

COMMISSION-MANAGER

COUNTIES:
- Daniels (Charter)
- Deer Lodge/Anaconda (Charter)
- Fergus (Charter)
- Flathead (Charter)
- Golden Valley (Charter)
- Hill
- Lewis & Clark (Charter)
- Musselshell
- Lincoln (Charter)
- Park (Charter)
- Petroleum (Charter)
- Prairie (Charter)
- Sanders (Charter)
- Valley (Charter)
- Wheatland (Charter)
- Yellowstone (Charter)

MUNICIPALITIES:
- Billings (Charter)
- Bozeman
- Glendive
- Hardin
- Havre
- Helena
- Kalispell
- Laurel
- Lewistown (Charter)
- Miles City
- Plentywood
- Scobey
- Townsend (Charter)
- Whitefish (Charter)

COMMISSION-CHAIRMAN

- Wibaux County
- Conrad

TOWN MEETING

Manhattan Rexford Terry (Charter) Valier

DISINCORPORATION

- Columbia Falls
- Libby
- West Yellowstone
- Wibaux

ELECTION DATES: JUNE: Blaine County, Bozeman, Clyde Park, Deer Lodge County/Anaconda, East Helena, Glasgow, Hardin, Helena, Jordan, Kalispell, Lewistown, Lewis & Clark County, Missoula County/ Missoula, Richland County, Townsend, Whitefish; SEPTEMBER: Billings, Columbia Falls, Wolf Point, Yellowstone County.

Most other study commissions have tentatively decided on November Elections.

REMEMBER: STUDY COMMISSIONS MUST HAVE TENTATIVE REPORTS DRAFTED, ADOPTED AND PRINTED BY JUNE 1, 1976

THE FINAL REPORT MUST BE ADOPTED BY AUGUST 1, 1976; THE FINAL REPORT PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED BY OCTOBER 3, 1976

If your study commission has made a decision we don't know about, write Arnold Malina, State Commission on Local Government, Capitol Station, Helena, Montana 59601. Phone 449-2814. Articles on your study commission also will be appreciated.

'GOOD GOVERNMENT' HAS A DOZEN ENEMIES

In its Municipal News, the Municipal League of Seattle and King County (725 Central Building, Seattle 98104) lists "12 Enemies of Good Government," as follows:

1. Citizens polarized only around their special interest and not willing to recognize another point of view.

2. Decision makers who cater and respond to special interests to the detriment of the larger community.

3. A lazy or disinterested citizenry that is willing to be led with no questions asked.

4. Leaders in public life who follow only politically popular trends and surface with a flurry of activity and press releases six months before an election.

5. Government that becomes stagnant and moribund in its own bureaucratic entanglement.

6. The bright and energetic government employee or official who is held back and covered up by a superior who is a graduate of the "Peter Principle" school of incompetency.

7. A government bureaucracy that stifles individual initiative and is geared only to input and not output.

8. Government services and operations that are duplicating and overlapping and as a result are confusing, inefficient and costly.

9. The honest but arrogant and proprietary official who maintains an iron hostility to any suggestions that functions of his agency be changed or realigned.

10. The citizen who blindly opposes any change or improvement in local government by responding with any easy cliche or simply ignoring the problem.

11. A person who wants the easy way and avoids the tough decisions necessary to realistically deal with the issue.

12. The masks and coverups that are the work of the professional image makers.

COMMISSION-MANAGER STATISTIC

The commission-manager plan has been adopted on the average of more than once every week by a city or county since 1945. The average annual total of adoptions has been 61.

RICHLAND COUNTY MODIFIES ITS PROPOSAL

Public criticism of the Richland County Government Study Commission's proposed revisions for county government resulted in several changes in the commission's charter (commission form) proposal. More than 50 persons attended the three-hour hearing Monday night (April 5, 1976) in the Sidney National Bank.

The study commission had originally proposed to make the offices of assessor and treasurer appointed offices rather than elected offices as they are now, but criticism from those at the hearing resulted in the commission dropping that idea.

The clerk and recorder, however, will become an appointed office rather than an elected office as it is now.

Under the revised government, a courthouse manager would take over the duties of clerk of court and superintendent of schools The courthouse manager would also serve as a "money clerk" by handling money flow, according to commission member John Redman. The courthouse manager, however, would not be responsible for drawing up the county budget and would be required to live in Richland County.

According to the proposed revision, the county attorney and sheriff would remain elected positions and the position of road foreman would remain an appointed position. The number of county commissioners would also remain the same at three. Each commissioner would serve for a six-year term with one being elected every two years for staggered terms. The positions of coroner and surveyor would be appointed rather than elected as they are now.

-from the Sidney Herald 4/7/76

LIBBY PROPOSES DISINCORPORATION

The Libby study commission has unanimously decided to offer what chairman Marvin Sather calls "a real alternative" to the voters in November: the disincorporation of Libby (pop. 3,800).

Sather said that the town is in financial straits--there is not enough money to improve the streets and sewers and citizens have been taxed at the maximum mill levy for years. The study commission feels that disincorporation is the only alternative that would help bring economy and better services to Libby. "It is a waste of the taxpayers' money to have duplicative city-county clerical services or jail services," Sather said.

Sather said that the city and county have been pursuing interlocal agreements in the areas of police and street services for the past few years. These services are the two major service items in the Libby budget. The commission sees disincorporation as a more comprehensive way of achieving those ends.

Sather noted that Libby is the county seat. "County officials would be right in the city and responsible to us," he said. And the fact that three out of five commissioners in the proposed Lincoln County charter would reside in Libby should the charter pass, also secures the town's representation should it disincorporate.

SIXTEEN STUDY COMMISSION PROPOSALS UP FOR JUNE VOTE

Voters across the state will decide on Tuesday, June 1, to accept or reject the proposals of 16 local government study commissions. Two consolidations, 8 commission-manager proposals, 4 commission-executive proposals and 2 commission proposals will be voted upon.

The vote on the consolidation charters will take place in Missoula/Missoula County (with an elected executive-appointed administrative suboption) and Anaconda/Deer Lodge County (with a commission-manager form).

Lewis & Clark County, Helena, Bozeman, Kalispell, Lewistown, Whitefish and Hardin will be voting on the commission-manager form. Each of these study commissions, except Kalispell and Hardin, also will be asking the voters to approve self-government charters.

The citizens of East Helena will vote on a strong mayor commission-executive form with self-government powers; those of Glasgow and Clyde Park will vote on the commission-executive form with self-government powers; and those of Jordan will vote on the commission-executive form with an enlarged council.

Blaine County and Richland County will vote on charters with the structure of the commission form; the Blaine County proposal also includes a mandated administrative assistant and the Richland County proposal includes a "courthouse manager" who would take over the duties of clerk of court and superintendent of schools.

VOTER REVIEW

State Commission on Local Government
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59601

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